CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1549
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STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 21

The G.21 emphasises that nuclear disarmament is the highest prioritiy for the Conference on Disarmament (CD). In order to promote the work of the CD, the group underscores its flexibility in accepting the proposal to establish an ad hoc committee under item 1 of the agenda - entitled « Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament » - to negotiate a convention on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices ». This gesture should be reciprocated by others through their agreement on the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, as well as during the course of the negotiations to be conducted in the ad hoc committee which we have just agreed to establish.

The group of 21 stresses the importance of the elimination of the possibility of nuclear war and the threats derived from the continued existence of nuclear weapons, and the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The group expresses its support for the President's declaration that in accordance with paragraph 1 of decision CD/1501, intensive consultations will continue with a view to reaching a decision on an appropriate subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament. The group is of the view that these consultations should lead to the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, and recalls the various proposals presented collectively and individually by its members.

The G.21 believes that the proposed treaty dealing with fissile material must constitute a nuclear disarmament measure, and not only a nuclear non-proliferation measure, and be an integral step leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The treaty shall also promote international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mindful that the achievement of nuclear disarmement requires urgent negotiation, the group emphazises the imperative need for all states to commit themselves unequivocally to the objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. An ad hoc committee should be established in the CD to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention.

The G.21 believes firmly that a satisfactory solution to the issue of nuclear disarmament will have a direct bearing on the work of the CD in the future.